

## **MINUTES**

Citizen's District Council Meeting  
City of Muskegon CDBG  
Conference Room 203  
Muskegon, Michigan  
Tuesday, March 4, 2014

### **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Tom Pastoor, at 5:40 p.m. He welcomed the new Board member, Emma Torresen, representing Ward 4 and introduced the other members to her.

### **ROLL CALL**

Roll call was taken by Laura Hichue

Present: Tom Pastoor, Addie Sanders-Randall, Kim Burr, Chris Carter, Billie Quinn, Emma Torresen, Commissioner Ken Johnson

Excused: Chris Carter, Rosalind Ford

Staff Present: Oneata Bailey, Laura Hichue

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

After reviewing the February, 2014 minutes, a motion was made by Kim Burr to approve the minutes. Addie Sanders-Randall seconded the motion which carried unanimously. Mr. Johnson asked that his packet be e-mailed to his City e-mail address.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Pastoor talked about the communication plan that was discussed at the last meeting regarding how to get the word out about the City's programs and the sources that could be used; they included the neighborhood associations, Evanston Avenue Church, Face book. Oneata stated that the City Clerk would put any information given her on the City's Face book page and there are updates every few weeks. Oneata also stated that there were many calls after the article was on M-Live and in the Chronicle. Safebuilt has also asked for leaflets about the Rental Rehab program to send out with their mailings.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Pastoor asked Oneata about the meeting with the City Manager and City Staff. Oneata stated the meeting was with the City Manager, the Planning/Economic Director, and the Finance Director.

Mr. Pastoor stated that in the past, most of the CDBG monies went to City staff and services, but some comments made at the public meetings suggested different ways to possibly use some of the monies. The subsequent meeting after the public hearings was to discuss the funding. He asked if there was a possibility of using a portion of the monies for one of those ideas.

Oneata stated HUD suggested that we plan on the same amount as last year with a 5% decrease. Last year the City received almost \$900,000 and was able to give Love, Inc. almost \$9,000. They provide ramps and rent/utility assistance to income qualified residents. The City was able to help approximately 12 people in 2013.

Mr. Pastoor asked what happened in the meeting regarding the 2014 funding.

Oneata stated there were several good ideas presented at both public meetings that were held the previous month. One of the suggestions was to assist seniors in the downtown areas, specifically snow removal around the Frauenthal area. She stated the Downtown Development organization would address that and we will not have to use CDBG monies.

Oneata said one thing the CDBG funding could be used for are Neighborhood Grants. These would provide each neighborhood association to assist with something in their neighborhood. She cited the Nims Neighborhood attempting to create a playground on the Nims School property. She said funds have been raised and they need assistance in reaching their first goal.

Mr. Johnson discussed the neighborhood's plans and where they were in the process with the School Board and the City.

Mr. Pastoor advised Mr. Johnson on some issues to address as they go forward with their vision for the playground.

Mr. Pastoor asked Oneata if there was a dollar amount proposed at the meeting for the neighborhood grants.

Oneata stated that \$20,000 to \$30,000 could be set aside for the neighborhood grants. It could be used for a park in the neighborhood that needs help, or a baseball field. What the City wants to see in a grant is that their has been due diligence done on the neighborhood association's part and that there is some existing funding when applying and goals, rather than coming with nothing in hand.

Mr. Pastoor asked if this would be done annually.

Oneata stated that the City will see how it goes this year and if some groups don't receive funding because of the high interest, it could go into the following year and see if they are still interested.

Oneata said she will get the information out at the NAM meeting on Wednesday to get them to start thinking about what they could use some funding for. The only way to receive the funding would be through an active neighborhood association.

Mr. Pastoor would like to have the neighborhoods that have the ability to get things done to help those that don't have the manpower or ability.

Oneata said another idea brought up at the planning session was time-banking. The City is proceeding with Volunteer Muskegon in looking for city residents to list what their “talent” is and how much time they would be able to volunteer, and put together a roster of who and what. Then, when someone needs assistance with doing a small job around the home, they could contact Volunteer Muskegon to team them with someone that would be able to help them. Mr. Peterson would like the City’s employees to be the “guinea pigs” and is having the IT Department work with Volunteer Muskegon to get the list started.

Oneata stated Mr. Peterson is also interested in expanding the vinyl siding program to include painting. There is a target area being created to address blight in a portion of the Nelson Neighborhood concentrating around the high school. There also will be demolition monies available to address homes that have been vacant for a long period of time and are a blight to the neighborhood. Another \$30,000 may be added to the target area to address these types of properties to make an impact in an area.

Mr. Pastoor reviewed what has been the process for allocating CDBG funds and asked Oneata what the CDC’s voice would be in this year’s process now that the public has had an input.

Oneata stated that hopefully at the next meeting all of the proposals would be able to be presented. She said that only 2 CHDO applications were submitted and the total amount was less than \$100,000 for both of them.

Mrs. Torresen asked what the average amount per house was requested from a CHDO.

Oneata stated it varied depending on what they were using the money for. For a total rehabilitation or two-unit, it would probably be around \$50,000. She further explained the different costs that can determine the amount.

Mr. Johnson asked if the CDC can guide or advise a CHDO where to do infill or rehabs.

Oneata stated the applications are based on the City’s 5 Year Plan and the CHDO has to align with that plan. Because the Target Area plan and the CHDO applications are at the same time, they wouldn’t know that we are targeting a certain area and may have their project already scheduled for another area; fortunately, Community enCompass does do work in part of the Nelson Neighborhood.

Oneata further told the Board that the packet for the next meeting will include the CHDO applications and the proposals from City Staff, which is the City Manager, the Finance Director and the Planning/Economic Director.

Mr. Pastoor stated that he was very excited that the City was opening up to new ideas and investing more in the City.

Mr. Johnson stated thought it was important for the CDC and the City to invest CDBG money in the community.

Oneata stated that money isn’t being taken from anybody; it’s being taken from a City program that may not be working as well as hoped.

Oneata asked if the Board would like to have the CHDO’s present at the next meeting.

Mr. Pastoor didn't think it was necessary; Mrs. Torresen asked questions about the application process and Oneata explained.

Mrs. Torresen asked what happens with unused monies that were granted the year before.

Oneata explained that the City can take it back and use it for other programs. She explained what Habitat for Humanity and Community enCompass are planning on doing.

Mr. Pastoor clarified that the 2 CHDO's are still planning on using last years funds and what they are asking for this year will be used for a different project. Oneata agreed and that the funding being requested for this year will begin July 1.

Oneata explained that at the next meeting will be the budget package to review and answer questions if there are any. After that, the budget will go to the City Commission. The Action Plan will also need to be prepared and submitted to the CDC before the May meeting based on what is approved in April.

Oneata stated that the DTE Test and Tune Program is helping the CNS budget by reimbursing for furnaces and will continue quarterly for the year.

Mr. Pastoor asked about expanding the vinyl siding program; Oneata explained that was for the target area and she would provide a narrative for that item in the budget packet. If the Board had questions about it, Mr. Peterson could be asked to come to the meeting.

Discussion took place regarding the new Neighborhood Grant funding. Oneata stated the CDC would assist the City in preparing the criteria for the grant request and provide parameters.

Mr. Pastoor stated that the board could assist doing that but did not feel comfortable evaluating the requests when they were submitted because most of the Board members belonged to neighborhood associations.

Mr. Pastoor stated he felt that any applications that come in representing multiple neighborhoods willing to work together would be given strong consideration. He explained issues that his neighborhood has in common with others. Discussion took place regarding costs of printing and mailing neighborhood newsletters.

## **STAFF REPORT**

Oneata stated that the M-Live article created a large volume of phone calls and e-mails inquiring about the programs.

Mrs. Quinn moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:35 p.m.; the motion was seconded by Mrs. Burr and carried unanimously.

The next scheduled meeting is April 1, 2014, at 5:30 p.m.